3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
SV3 Haiti SV3



The major effect of the North American tenure seems to have been to make possible a much more telling centralism in political control than had been operative in Haiti at any time since the fall of the Christophe regime; and the consequences of this change are still being felt.

Small-scale rural cultivators are famous for their tendency to confine their consumption to culturally conventionalized levels—that is, to live as their predecessors lived before them. Though they are involved in commercial spheres larger than the communities in which they live, they seek to limit that involvement and to maintain their cash expenditures at a low level. It is in this sense that Haiti might be called a "quasi-capitalistic" society. To put it another way, yeomen of this sort do not seek to change or to expand their production—rather, they aim to conserve a way of life set by tradition. The ideology of resistance to social and cultural change is one of the major obstacles to development; but it would be rash to damn such an ideology without reflection. In Haiti, for instance, there has long been pressure upon the rural masses to expand their production of coffee, the major export crop. However, this pressure has not been accompanied by any serious grass-roots attempt to improve coffee production or to offer genuine incentives to the cultivators. The yeomanry has no assurance at all that any expansion of effort will lead to gains *for them*; and they are little prepared to invest such effort merely because they are told that it will be good for Haiti. In fact, it is likely that the production of subsistence crops has expanded in recent years at the cost of coffee production, for the yeoman knows that he can at least be sure of eating and of selling locally such crops as maize, sorghum, and yams, regardless of what may happen in Port-au-Prince or to the world coffee market. This view, combined with the yeoman's painfully acquired distrust of those who prate at length concerning his welfare, has meant a virtual stagnation of agricultural export production, even though the whole land quite literally depends on this production in order to progress.

The effect of this rural resistance is to create an apparent very sharp difference in goals between countryman and bureaucrat. It is perfectly understandable that the countryman should fail to see the connection between heightened coffee production and a higher level of public welfare and social services. His experiences hardly persuade him that it is his surplus-producing capacity that underlies the kind and quality of public institutions with which the state provides him.

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prestige, and the normal fulfillment of dignity, were thus frustrated in their efforts. They began to see that the Emperor intended to withhold from them freedom, room for the exercise of ability or power, fullness of life in whatever form. Not only was there little opportunity for achieving prestige; the repressive and contemptuous attitude of Dessalines denied them even ordinary negative respect, without which dignity of life is impossible.

By confiscation of vacant and falsely claimed estates, Dessalines created a vast public domain. He did not hesitate to secure other lands which he considered valuable, resorting to arbitrary and often cruel means—even, it is said, to forgery and murder—to dispossess those who stood firm in their claims. This attack on private property added other dissidents to his enemies—men who felt themselves clearly in the right legally and morally, men who with clear consciences joined the movement to put down a tyrant. The land thus acquired was leased in parcels at an annual rent to the highest bidders.[6]

The Emperor was blind to the normal human needs of the better elements of the population. He deprived them of property in land, the only basis they knew for wealth and independence; he forbade enterprises undertaken by individual initiative; he continually wounded delicate sensibilities. The Emperor was not a man to spare people's feelings, and he dared use the frank but dangerous words Negro and mulatto. He once shouted to a group of pleaders for position: "*Prenez garde à vous, nègres et mulâtres! Nous avons tous combattu contre les blancs; les biens que nous avons conquis en versant notre sang, appartiennent à nous tous; j'entends qu'ils soient partagés avec équité!*" It was not only Dessalines' idea of "equity" which aroused the *anciens libres* but his use of the descriptive nouns they hated.

The colored people were well aware of the hostility of Dessalines to their group. He was inferior to them in learning, and knew it. He was certainly, by the world's judgment, inferior to them in birth. His very deficiencies by comparison with his colored subjects made him hate them more: for example, he was passionately fond of dancing, preferring compliments on his grace to praise of his statesmanship; yet his awkwardness on the ballroom floor even

6. Although there are no records extant to show the exact amount of land which Dessalines succeeded in bringing into state ownership, it is estimated that more than two thirds of all the productive plantations in Haiti in 1806 were in the hands of the government. Other estimates range as high as ninety per cent.